

# Hejaz

## I. Life in the Holy Places of Islam

By Edmund Candler

Author of "The Mantle of the East"

THE Arabs speak of their country as El Jezireh, or "the Island," a word that also denotes a peninsula. As a matter of fact, Arabia is in everything, save in the strict geographic sense of the word, an island, for the northern deserts cut it off from commerce with the outside world. It is a country difficult of access to the stranger on all sides, by reason of its inhospitable approaches. Large areas are unmapped and unexplored. The southern desert, the Ruba el khali, as the Arabs call it, or "Abode of Emptiness," interposes such a barrier of uncompromising sterility between the coast and the interior that there is no record of it ever having been traversed by man. Broadly speaking, the whole of Arabia is almost rainless and niggard of vegetation, and contains no perennial streams, only the wadis (valleys, gulleys or ravines) fertilised by intermittent torrents and dry for the greater part of the year.

### A Vast "Abode of Emptiness"

The desert is generally hilly or undulating. A journey across the peninsula will take one over gravelly plains, wide stretches of deep sand forced by wind pressure into high billows and hummocks that loom like mountains in the mirage; soft dune country, and patches of hard fissured lava or scoriae overlaying mountains and plain. The rare oases of Central Arabia are found in the wadi basins where there is ground water, or in land which receives a precarious drainage from mountain chains. Oman in the east and Yemen in the south, which receive a certain precipitation from the monsoon, alone have sufficient periodic rains, while in the "Empty Abode" the rainfall does not amount to more than an inch in five years. An image

of the desolation of the peninsula may be conveyed statistically in the statement that it is a country of a million and a half square miles, which only contains five inland settlements important enough to fall within the category of towns.

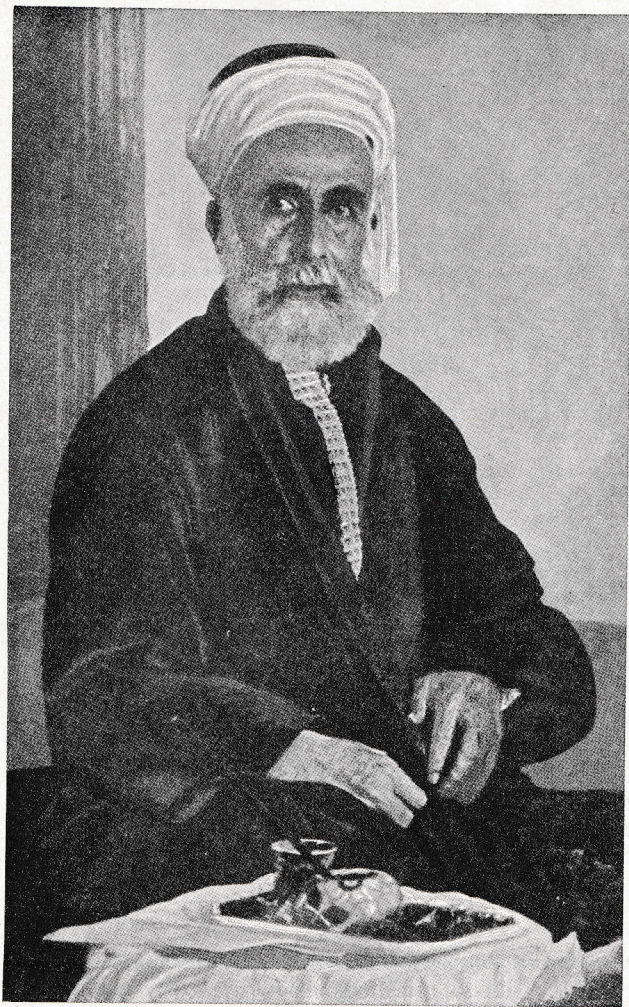
### Mysterious Mecca's Infinite Lure

Mecca and Medina, the Holy Cities of Islam, Sanaa, the headquarters of the Imam of Yemen, and Hail and Riadh, the capitals of Ibn Raschid and Ibn Saad, the kings of northern and southern Nejd, these are cities of romance which most travellers have dreamed of entering, but in which few have set foot. The physical barriers to a journey in Arabia are considerable, yet they are small beside the social, religious, and political exclusiveness of the town-bred Arab and the Beduin's cult of brigandage and assassination. Mecca and Medina are fanatically guarded, yet they have been penetrated by more Europeans than Sanaa, Riadh and Hail, though the command of the Prophet that no unbeliever should set foot in the sacred territory has been interpreted by his followers in its strictest and most literal sense. Mecca, to employ the Mahomedan word, is "haram," a term which first implies "unlawfulness," and then in the natural sequence of associations "sanctuary." To visit it at least once in a lifetime is the sacred obligation of every Moslem; for the Kafir, or infidel, to be detected within the precincts means death at the hands of the faithful.

Thus Mecca has become the pivot and focus of Islam. The city prescribes the physical and spiritual orientation of every Moslem. Millions of heads are bowed towards it at the hour of prayer. The dead are buried with their feet towards the Holy City, ready to



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**HUSSEIN, FIRST KING OF HEJAZ**

Of Arabian princely blood, Grand Sherif of Mecca and hereditary custodian of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, Hussein Ibn Ali proclaimed the independence of Hejaz and assumed the title of king in 1916

spring up facing the Prophet at the first note of the trump of doom. It has lent such an inflection of body and spirit to the faithful that we in the West, in conceiving a pilgrimage, borrow from it our metonymic headlines and speak, quite reverently, of the Mecca of golfers, or gourmets or gamblers, though we never speak of the Jerusalem, the Benares, or the Budh Gaya of folk who are drawn irresistibly by any magnet. The influence of Mecca in the mere physical orientation of humanity is second only to the Pole Star.

So to the European Mecca has become the supreme adventure of travel. To the fascination of the desert is added the greater fascination of the perilous transgression of bounds. The Arab proverb, "Voyaging is Victory," is often quoted by pilgrims on the road. To the unbeliever who accompanies them at the risk of his life the saying is more than a pious commonplace. For in the company of the faithful he must keep a vigilant watch on himself. Any lapse of ritual, whether in social or religious observance, as in drinking a glass of water, in greeting a wayfarer or in gesture or attitude during prayer, would be certain to arouse suspicion. Islam is as much a free-masonry as a religion, and the prescribed ceremonial of the daily routine is not easy to acquire. There are certain distinctive habits, formalities, and peculiarities of dress by which Moslems know one another. Then there is always the danger of being recognized by pilgrims who may have known one at other times and in other

scenes. The Moslem who discovers the infidel in the Holy Places merits honour and reward, whereas one detected in conniving at the sacrilege would be likely to receive short shrift.

To few Europeans has it fallen to be carried along with the tide of humanity that is borne every year in the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. There is no record of a professed unbeliever who has entered the city, and it is quite certain that if any have entered none has returned. To the European who is not a Mahomedan two ways only are open :



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he must profess Islam or go disguised. The first way is easy, but there is little glamour in it, and none of the challenge, the demand for courage and resourcefulness which lends the adventure its appeal. The pilgrim would find himself a despised renegade, allowed to move among the faithful on sufferance, spied upon, the object of suspicion and contempt.

To travel in disguise as a Moslem and take the extreme risk—assassination in the case of exposure—is the adventurous course. Not more than a dozen Europeans, apart from born Moslems or apostates, have been known to reach Mecca during the last hundred years, of whom four were Englishmen. Of these only Sir Richard Burton and Major A. J. B. Wavell have left any record of their experiences. Burton's "Pilgrimage to Meccah and Medinah" is the classic of travel in the Hejaz. Wavell's modest narrative "A Modern Pilgrim in Mecca" records an equally daring

journey. It is a tale carelessly told, as publication was an afterthought. Nevertheless, it glows with colour and human interest. Burton travelled alone, Wavell with two Moslem confederates, a Mombasa Swahili and a Europeanised Arab of Aleppo domiciled in Berlin. The Hejaz is the most dangerous and difficult point by which a European can enter Arabia. The system of espionage is an effective barrier to all who have not learnt to impersonate an Oriental on an Oriental stage. The Asiatic is inquisitive, and one must avoid the risk of meeting pilgrims from the country to which one is supposed to belong. It is best to appear as a vagabond. In Egypt, Burton chose the part of a wandering Dervish, a character assumed by Moslems of all ranks, ages, and creeds, and, what is more, one to which much remissness in ceremony and politeness is forgiven. But before leaving for the Hejaz he abandoned the Dervish's

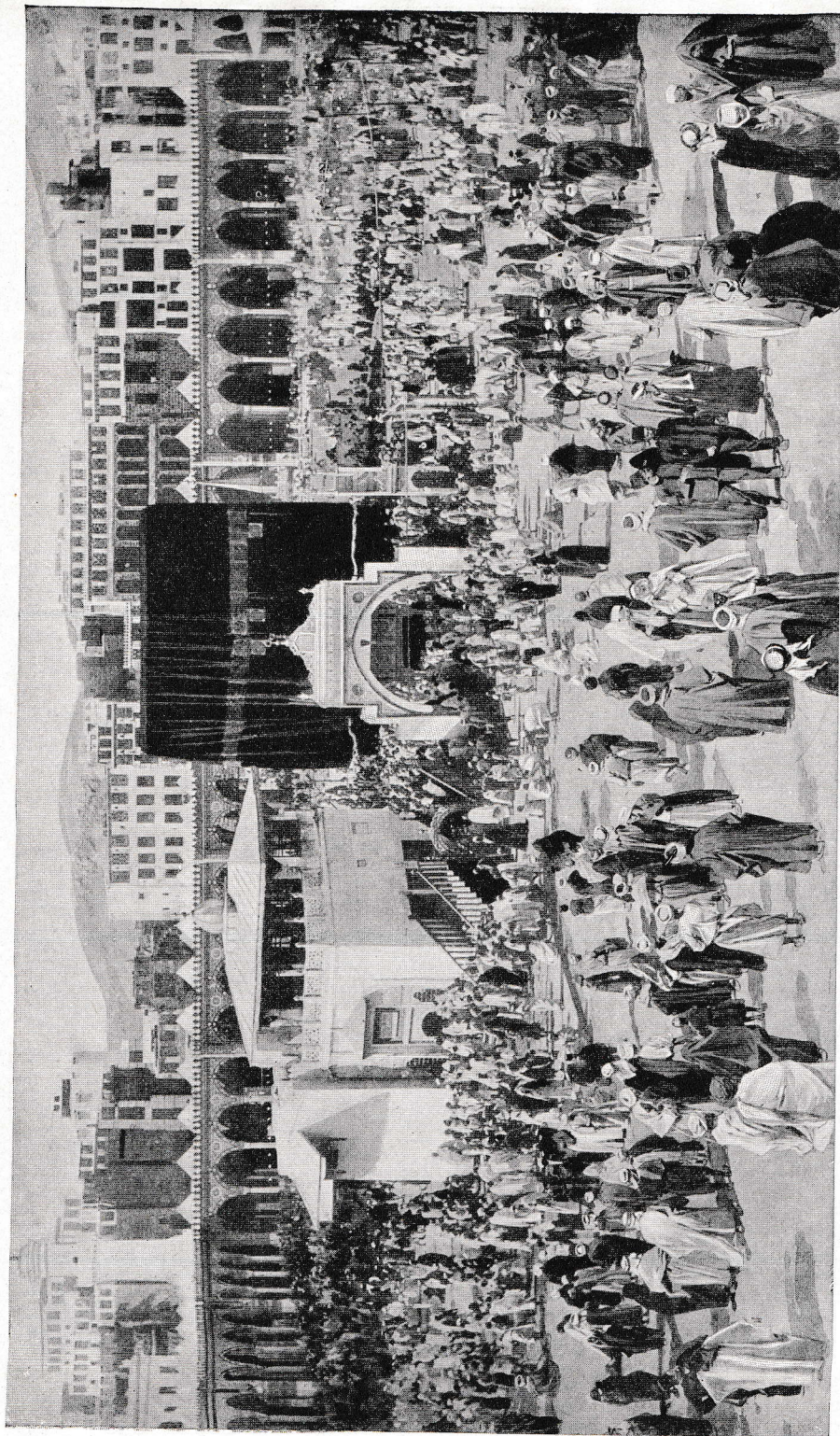


VENDERS OF HOLY WATER FROM HAGAR'S WELL

Mahomedan tradition says that it was at the well Zem-Zem that Hagar drew water for Ishmael, and that later the well was covered up and only rediscovered by Mahomet's grandfather. Now enclosed in a vaulted building within the Mosque at Mecca, its tepid waters are credited with healing powers.

They are also supposed to choke Christians, while washing away the sins of true believers





MECCA'S GREAT MOSQUE, THE HOLIEST SPOT ON EARTH IN MOSLEM EYES

The famous Mosque at Mecca is a great rectangular space, open to the sky and surrounded with colonnades. In the centre stands the cube-shaped structure known as the Kaaba, covered with the annually renewed Kiswah, or curtain of black silk brocade with a legend composed of extracts from the Koran embroidered in gold around it. Adjoining the Kaaba is the enclosed well of Zem-Zem. The pilgrims walk or run round the Kaaba seven times, reciting prayers, and, at the end of each

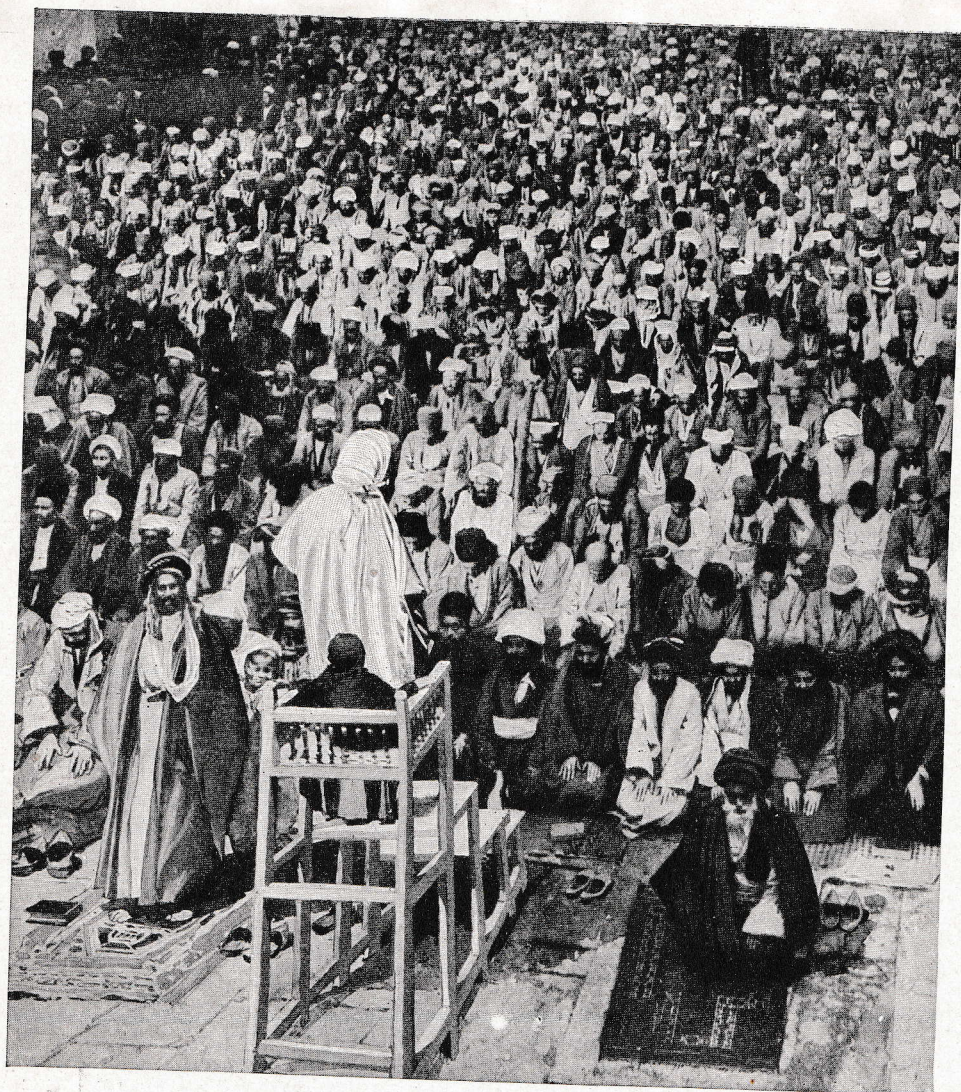




**PILGRIMS PERFORMING THE WUKUF: "STANDING ON" MOUNT ARAFAT TO LISTEN TO THE SERMON**

On the eighth, ninth, and tenth days of the Hadj the pilgrims pay the ceremonial visit to Mount Arafat which earns for them the title of Hadj or Hadji. Mounted on the eighth, ninth, and tenth days of the Hadj the pilgrims pay the ceremonial visit to Mount Arafat which earns for them the title of Hadj or Hadji. Here on the ninth day they and on foot, and followed by baggage animals, the white-robed host, often numbering half a million, streams to the Mount of Mercy. Here on the ninth day they "stand," listen to a sermon, and pray till sunset, returning on the following day for another "stand," after which they ceremonially "stone the devils"—pillars marking the spots once occupied by the idols which Mahomet destroyed





#### PIOUS MOSLEMS GATHERED AT THE "DURBAR OF GOD"

Immensely impressive is the spectacle of the vast congregations that assemble for worship in the Mosque at Mecca. Clothed in white ihrams, they face the Kaaba in the centre of the Mosque, and led by an imam, bend and sway in prayer, kneel and rise with him, and with one impulse bow to the ground, every brow pressed to the marble flags that pave the courtyard

gown, though not the character of vagrant. Wavell, who described himself as one Ali bin Muhammad, a subject of Zanzibar, ran greater risk of detection in adopting for his country a district in which he was known. More than once he felt he was on the point of being unmasked. He describes how at Mina three Mombasa Swahilis, who he believed would have denounced him, looked straight into his tent, but were blinded by the morning sun falling directly on their eyes, and so passed on without

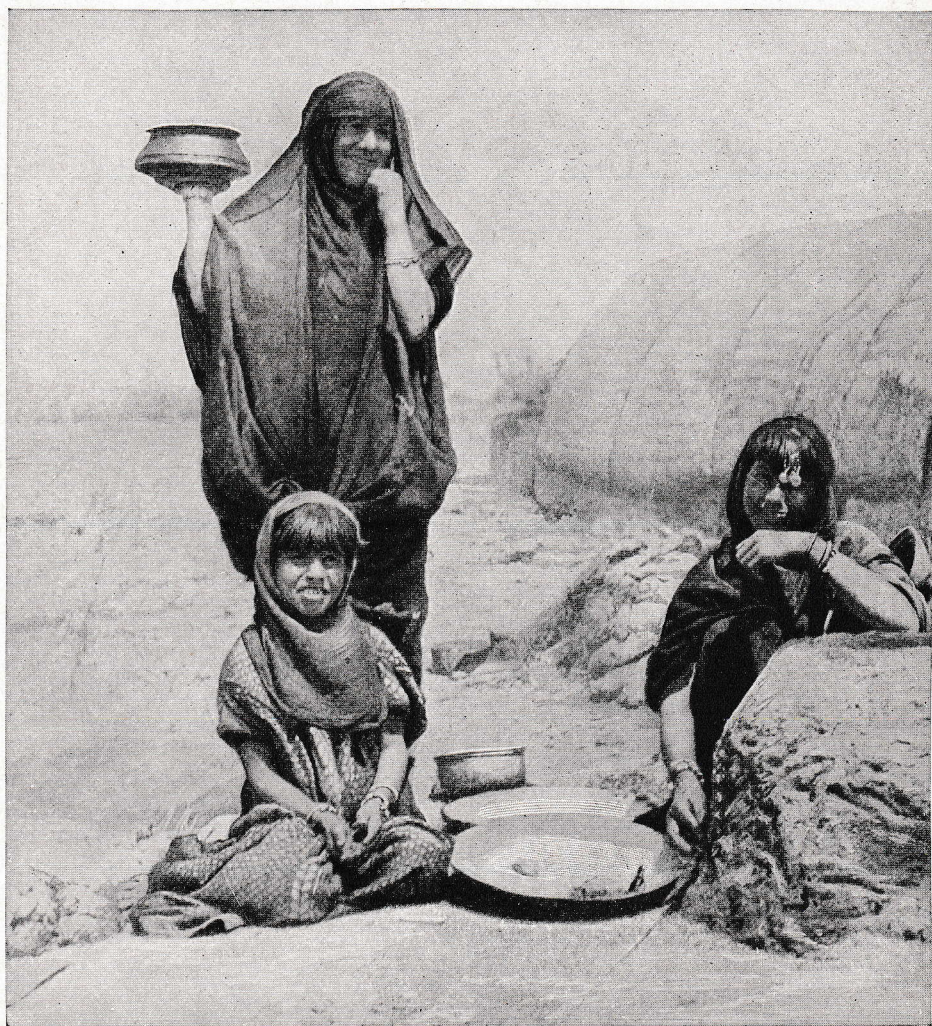
suspicion. No rehearsing of one's part is a safeguard against accidents like these. The traveller may be a born actor and a competent Orientalist, but to be at home in the character he has adopted he must know how to mix freely with Moslems, to attend ceremonies in and out of the mosque, to accept and return hospitality and salutations, to finger his rosary and adjust his dress without making mistakes. One cannot learn to pass inconspicuously among Moslems without



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making Moslem acquaintances and friends, and this means, however disciplined or observant or vigilant one may be, that there is always the danger of discovery through recognition. Both Burton and Wavell changed their identity on the road, but with embarrassing consequences that pursued them throughout the journey. "Bazaar rumours," as Burton observed, "fly quicker and hit harder than newspaper paragraphs."

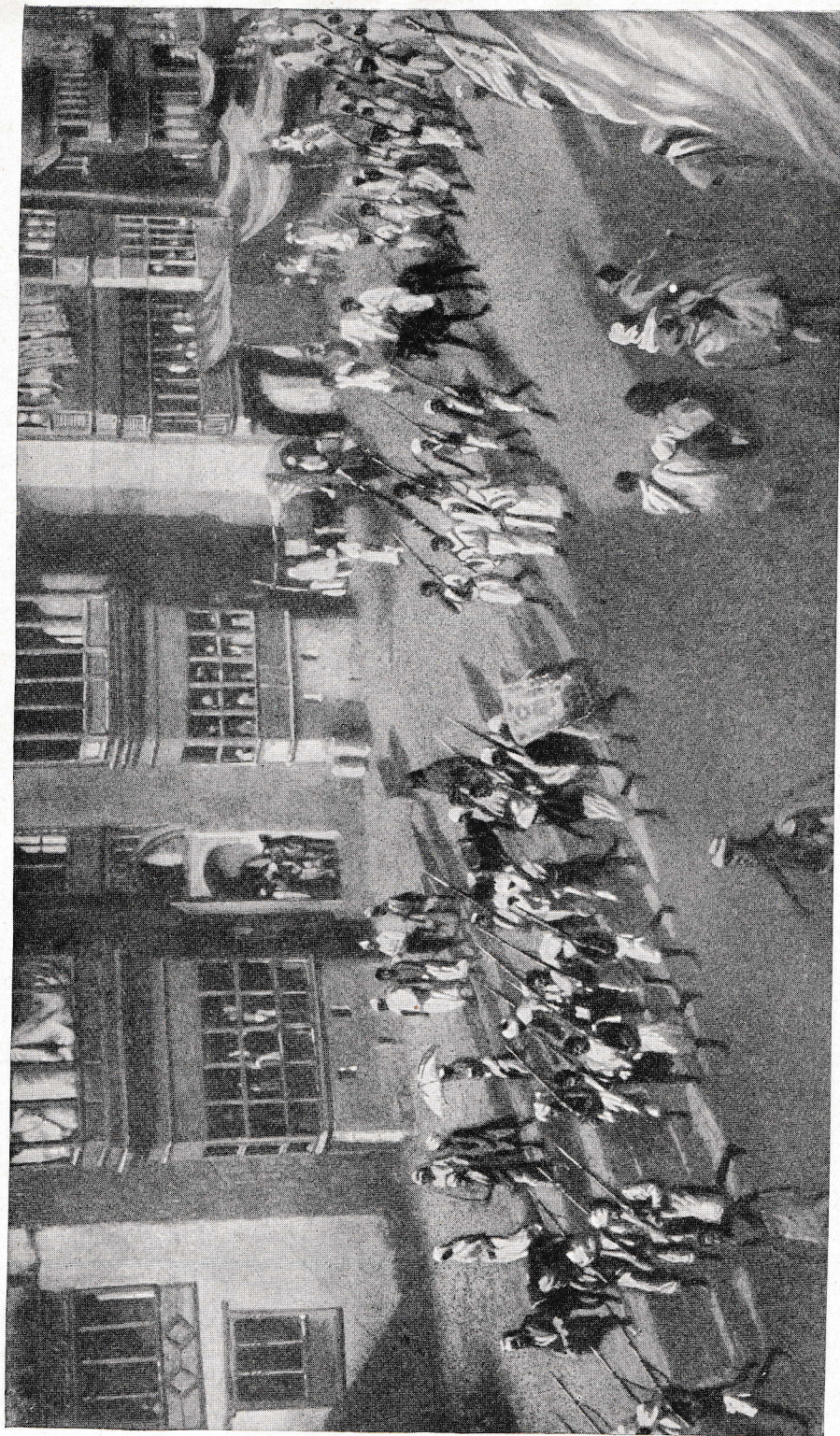
The perils of the spurious Hadj are probably greater to-day than ever they were. A new danger has arisen since Burton's time through the system of attaching special guides to pilgrims of different nationalities. These "muto-wifs," as they are called, regard travellers from their own particular provinces as their prey, study their dialects and idiosyncracies, and know a great deal too much about their pedigrees, antecedents and connexions. Like all



WOMEN OF HEJAZ KNEADING DOUGH FOR BREAD

They seem amused by the photographer's interest in their occupation—woman's work from immemorial times, and so dignified by importance and association that it has given the very word "lady" to the English language. The bread these women are making is unleavened; a simple mixture of coarsely-ground grain moistened with water and kneaded by hand and baked in a crude oven





#### SECULAR POWER DISPLAYED IN MECCA KEEPS IN CHECK EBULLITIONS OF RELIGIOUS ZEAL

While the Koran contains precise regulations as to the conduct of pilgrims, and the Meccan chiefs have provided for a suspension of tribal feuds during the three months of pilgrimage, as well as for the perpetual interdiction of bloodshed within their own precincts, the influx of so vast a number of religious fanatics inevitably puts a heavy responsibility on those in charge of law and order in the holy city. Demonstration of force often prevents necessity for its use, and parades of the Arab army in the streets of Mecca are a constant feature of the annual spectacle



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exploiters of pilgrims, they are singularly adhesive and difficult to shake off. Yet to go the round of the Holy Places in their company means encountering the very folk it is most essential to avoid.

The modern European pilgrim to Mecca or Medina would do well to hit on some stratagem to dissociate himself from the "mutowifs." The safest plan, perhaps, would be to discover a place of derivation which one shared with no one else. The Arabs and Turks are so abysmally ignorant of geography that a pilgrim might invent a language and country for himself, and gain admission to Mecca as the subject of a kingdom that did not exist. The language difficulty, as a matter of fact, is not so great as is generally supposed. It is the least of the obstacles to be overcome. Owing to the multitudinous dialects of Arabic, and the number of communities scattered all over Asia and Africa, who call themselves Arabs, but have no claim to the title, peculiarities in accent excite little attention. The Hadj is cosmopolitan in its confusion of tongues.

### By Train or Caravan to Mecca

Mecca and Medina lie in the province of the Hejaz, that narrow strip of territory in the west of Arabia bordering the Red Sea. In Turkish maps it is painted green, the Prophet's colour, though why green should be the symbolic hue of the brown and tawny wildernesses that make up nine-tenths of the territory of Islam it is difficult to say. The Hejaz is only less barren than the "Abode of Emptiness," for the monsoon current does not penetrate so far north as Jeddah. Mecca is a fire-pit. It is completely shut in by hills, and its bare and rocky background, which precludes any breeze, retains and reflects the heat all night. Rain only falls once or twice a year, and then in torrential downfalls, which sometimes flood the city to the depth of several feet and inundate the Mosque.

The Hejaz railway takes the bulk of the pilgrims now as far as the terminus at Medina, a journey of four days, though many of the pious and conservative

Moslems of the old school still march all the way under the Emir-el-Haj, the commander of the pilgrimage. The Egyptian caravan passes by Sinai and Midian to Yembu, and thence to Mecca or Medina. The Bagdad caravan leaves the Euphrates at Najaf or Samawah, and crosses the desert to the oasis of Hail, and thence to Medina. An alternative route is by Koweit on the Persian Gulf through Qasim. Wavell arrived at Medina by the Hejaz railway from Damascus, Burton by caravan from Yembu, whither he sailed in a pilgrim boat from Suez.

### Medina and the Prophet's Tomb

Thus both travellers began the Hadj at Medina, which to the stranger is the more dangerous city of the two. During the pilgrimage season the risk of exposure is less in Mecca, where the crowd is so packed that anyone with a fair knowledge of Arabic and Moslem ceremonial stands a good chance of passing unnoticed. Less than a third of the pilgrims go on to Medina, as a visit to the Prophet's tomb, though meritorious, is not essential in the Hadj. The Medani, consequently, is more suspicious and inquisitive, the mutowifs of the city are more difficult to evade. Moreover, at Medina there would be less chance of escape after detection on account of the greater distance to the sea.

### Outer Barbarians Who Live by Plunder

The Beduins of the Hejaz are notoriously the most predatory cutthroats in Arabia. They have little commerce with the towns, which are independent of them, and subsist almost exclusively on plunder; manual labour they consider degrading. The pilgrims have reason to hate and fear them, and to the town-bred Arab they are "outer barbarians." They hang on the skirts of caravans and pick off stragglers, sniping them at two or three hundred yards, and, when they make a hit, galloping in to plunder their victim. Even the short journey of 55 miles from Jeddah to Mecca is insecure in spite of the protecting blockhouses with their armed garrisons at frequent intervals



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### HOMeward BOUND FROM THE WELL

Though not beautiful, she has grace of figure developed by the Eastern custom of carrying water vessels upon her head, and not to be hidden by the sombre draperies that envelop her from head to foot

on the road. The train from Mecca to Medina is infested with thieves. The Hejazi Beduins are frankly plunderers, and murder is merely the preliminary to pillage. Of pure race, they have kept their blood unmixed for centuries and boast of their nobility, though they

display nothing of their ancestral qualities except "greed of gain, revengefulness, pugnacity, and a frantic kind of bravery, displayed on rare occasions."

These Beduins are not good Mahomedans. Only in extremities are they known to pray. Nor is it religious fanaticism that makes them hostile to foreigners so much as fear of political penetration. Also the intrusion of the infidel in their forbidden Holy Places touches their pride. The first Beduin who caught sight of the Frank's hat, Burton remarked, would not deem himself a man if he did not drive a bullet through the wearer's head. They are always looking out for spies. To be seen sketching is to run the risk of assassination. They regard pen and paper with the greatest suspicion. Burton was nearly betrayed by a sextant. He used to cut up his sketches into squares, number them, and hide them in the tin canisters that carried his medicines.

Rarely does a Hadj return from the pilgrimage without some story of an encounter with the Beduins. The Turkish garrison, when the Hejaz was nominally a province of the Ottoman Empire, was never able to subdue the Arabs. When Burton

entered Medina, in 1853, the Yembu caravan with which he travelled was held up by the Beduins outside the city, and only permitted to proceed on condition that its escort of 200 horses retired to their barracks. His caravan was attacked again two marches before Mecca, and



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suffered many casualties. Wavell, fifty years later, entering Medina by the Hejaz railway, found the city in a state of siege; desultory fighting continued during the whole of his stay.

It is the lurking presence of the Beduins, the human fauna of the wilderness, haunting the rocks and wadis, and appearing as if by magic out of the arid level steppes to waylay the traveller, that lends Arabian travel its sense of danger and fascination. In solitary journeys the stimulus of the desert is even greater than with a caravan. It is with a feeling of awe and exhilaration that the traveller rides out of the last palm-fringed village into the illimitable desolation beyond. The sense of the desert is upon him, the embracing, soothing spirit of unconfinedness which breathes out of those boundless wastes, too real, too awful for monotony.

Folk living in green countries are apt to think of the desert as flat and featureless; in reality there is little sameness in it, and the monotony, such as it is, only stimulates the imagination with the sense of great distances overcome. Burton has noted in the desert how every slight modification of form or colour rivets observation. The senses are sharpened, and the perceptive faculties, prone to sleep over a confused shifting of scenery, act vigorously when excited by the capability of embracing each detail. And if there is any monotony in the scene it is dispelled by



### ENIGMATIC WOMAN IMPENETRABLY VEILED

Amenities of life are few in the arid Hejaz and the discomforts many, even for the indigenous population. An occasional walk abroad can bring little in the way of recreation to the veiled women gliding along the torrid streets

the mirage. However colourless and flat the earth may be, there is always food for imagination in the air. Apart from the lurking Beduin, there is material in a day's journey in the desert for a thousand and one romances. A desert journey should be undertaken





DEVOUT PILGRIMS TO THE HOLY CITY ENCAMPED AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN OF MERCY

Photography is very strictly prohibited in the Holy City, and infringement of this rule might involve grave penalties if discovered. Consequently, photographs of Mecca are exceptionally rare. This and the one on page 2602 were taken by an Indian officer, and have not been published elsewhere. The scene when the thousands of pilgrims are encamped outside Mecca is astonishingly the plain white with tents among the myriad crowd, swarming



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in early winter or spring. In summer the heat is insupportable. Happily, the Hadj is an ordeal prescribed for the pious Moslem only once in a lifetime. The pilgrimage must be performed in the first ten days of the last month in the Moslem lunar year; thus he can choose his season in the revolving cycle, the dates of the successive pilgrimages differing by about a month in our solar year. The Moslem, however, generally chooses his hour and year as the spirit moves him. He is not providently bound by seasons. The Hadj may fall in January or August, but the influx of pilgrims varies very little. In the summer the desert is a fiery furnace. The heat is staggering. The ground scorches one's feet. The sun, when it is strong, is the most relentless enemy that man can have. And in visiting the Holy Places the pilgrim must go uncovered. His back and head, if he is not a Beduin, will be raw and blistered from exposure to the sun.

### The Supreme Moment in Moslem Life

When all the hardships, dangers, and difficulties of the journey are passed, and the pilgrim approaches Mecca or Medina, his imagination is overawed, his feelings are too strong for speech. He walks with his eyes, as the Arab says. A hush falls over the caravan. There is no longer any shouting, singing, or discharge of muskets. Soon he will be in the holy Presence, the mystery towards which he has turned his face five times daily at the hour of prayer throughout his life. "O Allah!" he cries, as he approaches Medina. "This is the Haram (sanctuary) of the Prophet; make it to us a protection from hell-fire, and a refuge from eternal punishment. Oh, open the gates of thy mercy, and let us pass through them to the land of joy!"

Medina is seen from afar, but Mecca lies in a deep and narrow valley, so completely hidden on the seaward side that the sudden revelation of it to the jaded and weary pilgrim must be the most dramatic moment of his life.

"O Allah!" he cries at the first glimpse of the Mosque of the Prophet.

"Verily this is thy safeguard and thy sanctuary. Whosoever entereth it, he shall become secure."

Before entering the Haram, or the sacred circle, marked by pillars, that is drawn round Mecca, the pilgrim must discard his turban and sandals and put on the ihram, two cloths of soft pure white, the one worn round the waist, the other over the shoulders. This is the obligatory garb of the Hadj, and ensures that all enter God's house in a uniform spirit of humility, undistinguished by any mark or badge of rank or privilege. His first office is the tauf, or circumambulation of the Kaaba (Arabic, "Ka'bah").

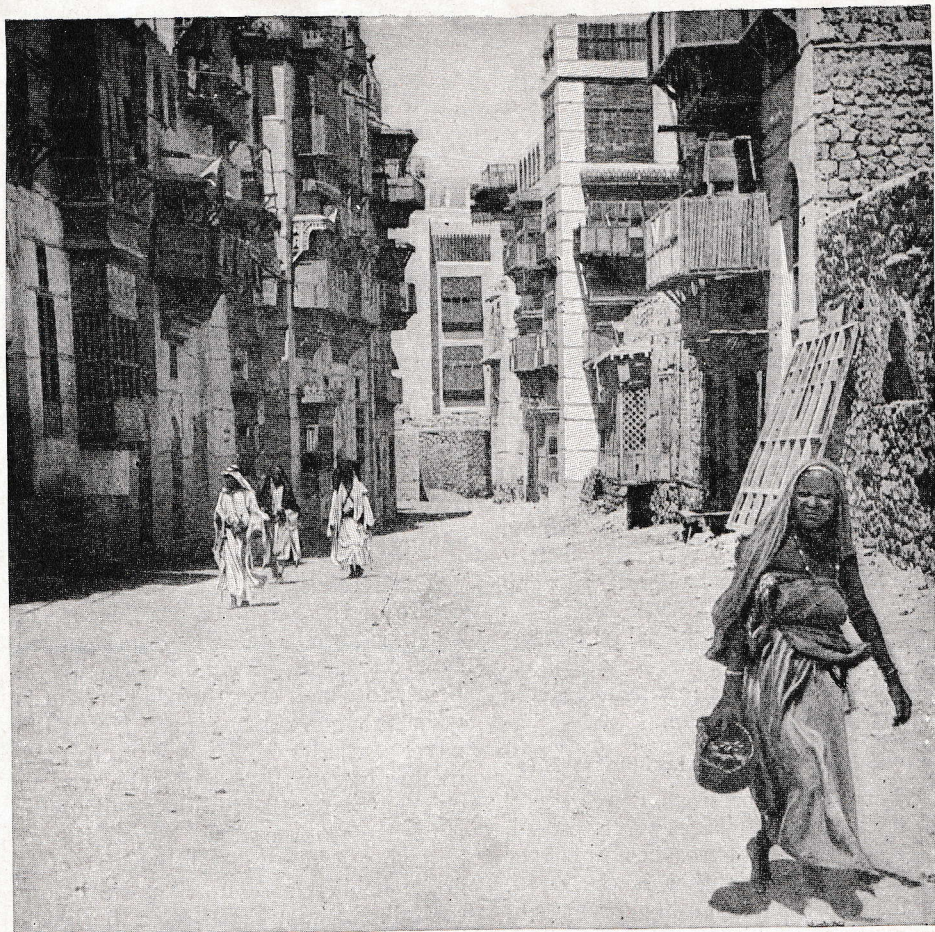
### "The Most Sacred Spot on Earth"

The Kaaba, the Holy House in the centre of the Beyt Ullah, or House of Ullah, is to the Moslems the most sacred spot on earth, the kibra, or pivotal point, to which every worshipper turns when praying. It has made Mecca the navel of the world, the parent city, the mother of towns. The Kaaba was an object of veneration in pre-Islamic days. According to the Arab legend it was built by Adam in the likeness of a house he had seen in Paradise before the fall. It was rebuilt after the Flood by Abraham and Ishmael and reconsecrated to the service of the true God. Afterwards the Meccans became idol-worshippers, until Mahomet conveyed to them the message of Islam and purified their temple of its abominations.

### Satisfaction of the Desire of the Heart

The first sight of the Kaaba evokes awe and wonder and ecstasy and tears; the thought of it kindles an inward flame in men's hearts in distant parts of the earth. In the pilgrims' fancy, the rustling of the Kisweh is the beating of angels' wings. They cling, weeping, to the curtain, and press their hearts and lips to the stone. The Moslem standing at prayer in some far country, head erect, and eyes fixed raptly on the horizon, is gazing Meccawards; his vision penetrates mountains, deserts, cities, forest trees, the curvature of the ocean, obstacles through which devout eyes





#### JEDDAH'S UNPAVED STREETS PARCHED BY A PITILESS SUN

Except to the pilgrims landing there on their way to Mecca, Jeddah is an uninspiring town. Rectangular balconies and windows break the monotony of the walls—often of rough coral—of the houses of the Arab population. The houses are set flush to the narrow winding streets lying between the better built sea frontage and the very mean outer suburbs occupied by negroes and Somalis

cleave a vista of faith to where at the end gleams the black and golden-banded pall of the Kaaba calling the faithful to the Durbar of God.

The pilgrim walks or runs round the Kaaba seven times, repeating the prescribed prayers, generally hand in hand with the inevitable "mutowif," and at the end of every circuit kissing the Black Stone; or if the crowd is too packed to approach it, he raises his hands to his ears and exclaims: "In the name of Allah, and Allah is omnipotent!" and kisses his fingers. This ceremony of the tawaf is repeated every day during the first seven days of the Hadj. After it, the pilgrim drinks

of the holy well of Zem-Zem, and feeds the pigeons of the Mosque, and performs the ceremony called El Sai, or the running seven times between the sacred hills of Safa and Marwah, quoting lengthily from the Koran and abundant in praise of Allah. This is a ritual of expiation. The rest of the day is filled with praying or attending sermons in the Prophet's Mosque, or visiting the holy sites in the neighbourhood of the city.

The great Mosque containing the Kaaba is the parent mosque, the model for the world of Islam. The inspiration is of the desert, conceived and inspired by illimitable horizons, designed for the expansion of the soul. It is in large open



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spaces, in broad and clean courts, in the bright light of the sun, that man appeals with the greatest sincerity to God. The Mosque is free of lurking mystery, dark images, oblique symbols, tortuous designs. It is "grand and simple, the expression of a single sublime idea."

Friday prayer in the Beyt Ullah is the most impressive scene. The uniform

white of the pilgrims' ihrams covers the courtyard and the cloisters, but not, as in every other mosque in the world, in parallel straight lines governed by the kibra, or point of direction ; for the Kaaba alone, being the object to which they turn, has no kibra, and the pious form circles round it instead of the usual straight lines with their faces turned towards Mecca. As the imam



**BLACK STALWARTS OF EMIR FEISAL'S BODYGUARD**

With their bright blades flashing in the sun, as if keen to carve their master's foes, this ferocious-looking pair have apparently stipulated that a military pose is the only one to which they will consent. The scene is Akabah, a town of Arabia standing near the top of the gulf of the same name that forms the north-east arm of the Red Sea, and on the ancient pilgrim route from Egypt to Mecca





#### BEDUINS BOUND FOR THE TOWN FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND DESERT OF HEJAZ

Treeless hills and brown and tawny regions of wilderness broken by small and infrequent areas of vegetation are the dominant features of the landscape of the almost rainless Hejaz. And the people are as unfriendly to strangers as their arid land. These Beduins are on their way to Akabah from the interior of the country. Their purpose is peaceable enough, but every man has his gun and other weapons, and not even armed garrisons at blockhouses along the road can secure the pilgrims from plunder and murder at their hands



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mounts the pulpit the multitude are hushed in expectation, there is a little stir and agitation, freshets moving on the surface of the great human tide, the pious preface to the rhythmic swell. The imam is kneeling, arms dropped to the knee, eyes fixed on the earth, back fervently inclined, still as a chrysalis and as informed with the winged spirit. Up again, head erect, arms folded on the breast, eyes fixed raptly on the Kaaba, and as he leads the prayer and bends and sways and kneels, and stands erect and awed, or bowed in the presence of God, the others bend and sway with him, moved with one rhythmic impulse, perfectly attuned, body and soul, in the Prophet's inspired discipline of supplication.

### Rhythmic Impulse of Religious Exaltation

Then, when the sermon ends, and he calls the takbir, the sea of white bodies rises with one impulse, thousands of white backs, like serried breakers, poised to fall. As the cry goes up from the pulpit the crests sway forward as one; then, at a word, they rise again and sink to earth, every brow pressed to the marble of the flags, not a head to be seen in that vast multitude, only the white loin cloths and the soles of the feet. At the moment when the forehead is pressed to the earth, not a sound, save the cooing of Allah's pigeons, breaks the silence of the Mosque. Again the word is spoken, and a reanimating thrill pulses through the multitude. They rise with a solemn stir and rustle of muslin and clink of weapons, like ghosts in their winding-sheets at the trump of doom. The moment the prayer is finished there is a rush to the Kaaba, the ceremony of the *tauf* is repeated amid a din of pious shouts and exclamations that may be heard in the mountains around.

The eighth, ninth, and tenth days of the pilgrimage are taken up with the visit to Arafat. This is the most obligatory of all the ceremonies, "the true pilgrimage," and it is the observance of it that earns the pilgrim the title of *Hadj*. In addition to the pilgrims, every able-bodied citizen of Mecca, from the

Grand Sherif downwards, takes the road. Burton and Wavell have described the crush. Between sunrise and ten in the morning at least half a million white-robed pilgrims, bareheaded, barefooted, half of them mounted and followed by a train of baggage animals, crowd the road and narrow defiles between Mecca and Muna. The roar of the great column is like a breaking sea, and the dust spreads for miles over the surrounding country.

### Confusion after "The True Pilgrimage"

The ninth day is the ceremony of *Wukuf*, or "standing" on Mount Arafat, when the pilgrims listen to the sermon and weep and pray until sunset, and then decamp and return hastily to Muna, the half-way station. This is the hour of the greatest confusion. "Like the hurry from Arafat" is an Arab proverb which conjures up a scene of struggling and swarming humanity. Litters are crushed, pedestrians trampled, camels and asses overthrown, the pilgrims attack one another with sticks and knives.

On the morning of the tenth day there is another "stand" at Arafat, followed by the ceremony of the "stoning of the devils." The great, the lesser, and the middle devils are pillars marking the position of the pre-Islamic idols which were destroyed by the Prophet, and the rite of lapidation symbolises the Moslem's contempt for heathen gods.

### Flight after Stoning the Devils

Here the press of pilgrims struggling like drowning men to approach as near as possible to the devils is so packed that a man might walk over their heads. Among them are "horsemen with rearing chargers, Beduins on wild camels, and grandees on mules with out-runners, breaking a way by assault and battery." A goat or a sheep is sacrificed after "the throwing." Then follows "the flight"—the return post-haste from Muna to Mecca in the midst of indescribable confusion. The *tauf* and the *sai* are repeated, once more the pilgrim kisses the Black Stone, and then, shaved and in secular dress, returns

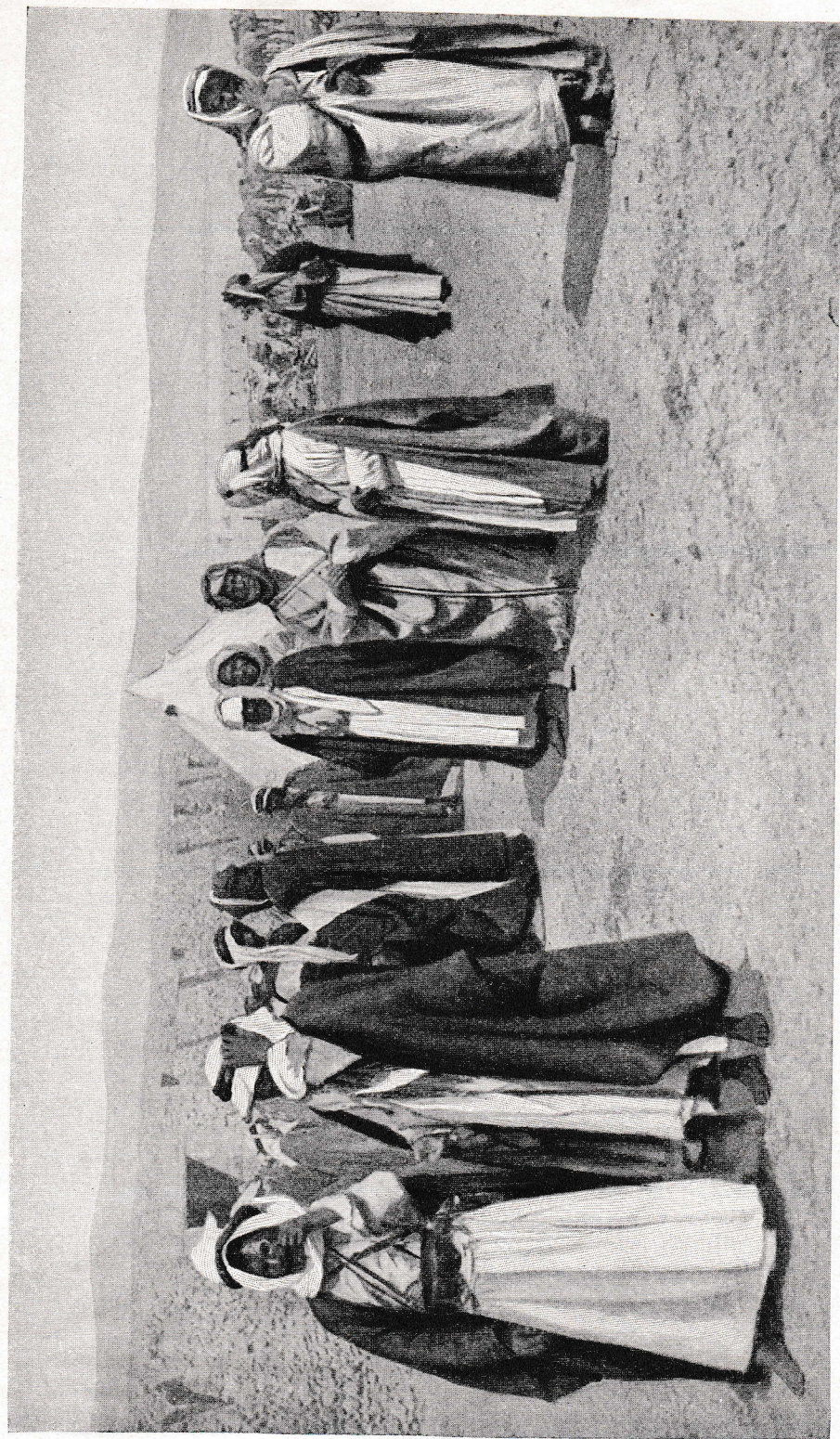




RAGS AND ROPES IN LIEU OF BRICKS AND MORTAR: NEGRO ARCHITECTURE IN HEJAZ

It would be difficult to imagine anything more unsavoury as a dwelling-place than the kind of beehive hut found in the negro villages near Jeddah. It consists of a mass of old felt, sacking, and rags of any and every description—this specimen even including an old hat among its components—lashed together with ropes. Verminous, dark, and airless, its only conceivable redeeming quality is its imperviousness to the solar rays due to the thickness of its textile substance





**FIERCE WARRIORS OF THE DESERT WHO OWN ALLEGIANCE TO THE KING OF HEJAZ**

Hejazi Beduins have a very definite reputation among travellers who have become acquainted with them. They are the most predatory cutthroats in Arabia, frankly plunderers with whom murder is merely a preliminary to pillage. While they boast of their pure lineage, they are not good Mahomedans, and, in turn, are a turbulent and troublesome element in the population. The Beduins here photographed have come to have audience with the Emir at Akabah



## HEJAZ & THE HOLY PLACES



ARAB SHEIKH REPRESENTING THE EMIR

This is the Sheikh Youssef in his office of deputy to the Emir. Seated in a portable collapsible chair of European origin, he deigns for a moment to raise to the camera his eyes—those watchful eyes of the East

before dark to Mecca for the day of the great feast. He may stay, if piety prompts him, for "the three days of the drying flesh," though this is no part of the obligatory ritual. The Hadj is completed.

Not more than a quarter of the pilgrims who appear at Arafat go on to Medina, though the Masjid-el-Nabawi, the Prophet's Mosque, is, after the Kaaba, the most venerable sanctuary of Islam. If the degree of merit is less in a visit to the Moslem Holy Sepulchre, the degree of ecstasy is even higher, and every devout Mussulman dreams of the day when he will gaze from a

high hill on the palm-trees of Medina, when his eyes will rest on the four glittering minarets and the green dome of the Prophet's tomb, when he will enter and pray even where the Prophet himself stood and prayed, saying: "One prayer in this, my mosque, is more helpful than a thousand elsewhere!"

The Hujra, the chamber in which Mahomet lies beside Abu-Bekr and Oman, the first two Caliphs, is hidden from the world by dark-green curtains, but, according to tradition, illuminated by a blinding supernatural light. Near the curtain on the north side is the tomb of Fatima, the Prophet's daughter. The garden she planted is outside. All the places consecrated by association with the Prophet's daily life are pointed out to the pilgrim who, as he drifts round ecstatically with the "mutowif," is filled with a great exaltation of spirit. The more emotional burst into tears and frantically kiss the railings of the Hujra, or

fall in a swoon at the foot of the curtain. The imagination is more affected than at the Kaaba itself.

Arabia is little changed since the days of the Prophet, and Islam is less overlaid with superstitious accretions than other faiths. The people and the religion are much what they were twelve hundred years ago. The Mecca pilgrimage must be more like a translation from a dream to a reality than is possible in lands where materialism and progress have dulled the instinct of veneration. In Arabia the spirit of religious tradition colours every hour of the people's daily life.





#### TEMPORAL ACTIVITY IN ISLAM'S SECOND HOLY CITY

Quintessentially Arabian both in architecture and in atmosphere is Medina, the city that ranks next to Mecca in sanctity in Moslem eyes, and, like Mecca, is forbidden to the "infidel." Down this main street, flanked on both sides by shops crammed with wares of every kind, the devout Moslems pass on their way to the sacrosanct Mosque that enshrines the tomb of the Prophet

*Photo, M. Gervais-Courtellemont*



# Hejaz

## II. From the Prophet Mahomet to King Hussein

By D. G. Hogarth, C.M.G., D.Litt.

Author of "The Penetration of Arabia," etc.

**H**EAJAZ is the name generally given to the undelimited section of the Red Sea slope of the Arabian Peninsula which lies north of Yemen. Hali Point is considered its southern limit. On the north, Khaibar was the old limit of the domain of its sherifal princes; but the district is now understood to extend up to Akabah and Maan.

It has no known history before about the date of the birth of Mahomet the Prophet, in or about 570 A.D. At that epoch Mecca, an old sanctuary and market of polytheistic tribesmen, had grown recently into a town through settlement successively by Yemenites (Khuthaa) and Koreish; the last perhaps hailed from the Euphrates and introduced Allah and an Abrahamic tradition.

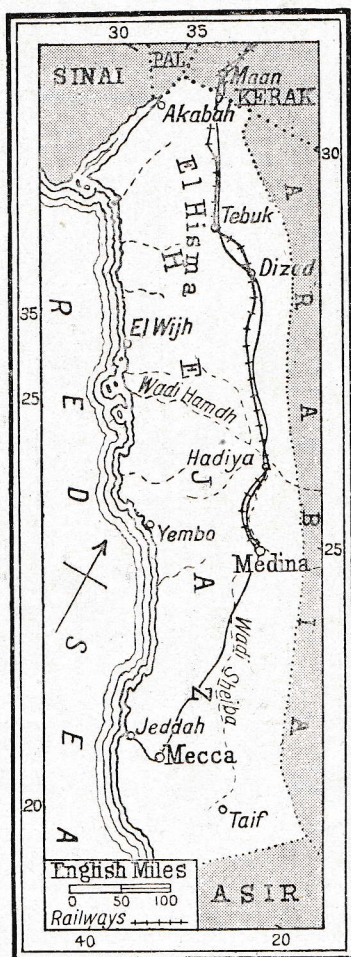
This commercially-minded tribe supported polytheism, seeing that the more gods—not excepting, it is said, the Byzantine Virgin—that could be settled round the Black Stone the more popular would be resort to its sanctuary. To promote this affluence and secure some safety for their caravan trade with Syria and Persia, the Meccan chiefs procured a suspension of tribal feuds during the month of annual pilgrimage and the perpetual interdiction of bloodshed within their own precinct.

The rest of Arabia, however, was not all pagan. In the east and centre a barbaric Christianity, derived through the Byzantine and Persian client-states of Ghassan and Hira, was professed; much of the south-west was Abyssinian Christian or Judaized; and Jews (or Judaized Aramaeans) were strong in north Hejaz and not unknown in Mecca.

Their influence, and that of other monotheists of Nejd and elsewhere, acted powerfully on a certain Meccan, Mahomet, born about A.D. 570, of the Hashimite clan of the Koreish. When he was sent, like other youths of family, with caravans to Ghassan and Syria, he realized that the kingdom of this world was to worshippers of a single god. His temperament, his sojourning in deserts, and, perhaps, an epileptic tendency made him see visions, from which state, having married money and had long leisure for meditation, he emerged before he was forty, convinced of a divine mission to make Allah even as Jehovah, and exalt his own native city as the focus of a common worship.

He began, about the year 610, with a single ally, Abu-Bekr, to sap the established polytheism by proselytising among the poor. After four years he had perverted more than a hundred families, and a sect crystallised round a small nucleus of better-class citizens, which men abused as the "Hanif" or the "Muslim," and so often threatened that presently the bulk of it fled to Christian Abyssinia, greatly to the chagrin of the Meccan chiefs. After failure to obtain delivery of these refugees, the religious conservatives of the city, fearful for their trade and the popularity of their sanctuary, took strong measures, outlawing and segregating the Muslimin during two years. But as this quarantine did not stop the disease, a compromise was effected.

This Mahomet soon disowned, and his preaching began to attract Arabs from without, notably certain Khasraj tribesmen of Yathrib in north Hejaz, who were



THE KINGDOM OF HEJAZ

See also map of Arabia, p. 192



## HEJAZ & ITS STORY

seeking help in a local quarrel. The Meccan chiefs saw nothing for it but murder, whatever the consequence of blood-feud; but Mahomet slipped away into the waste and made his way to Yathrib on September 20, 622. That city was henceforward to be known as el-Medina, and this dates the era of Hejira or Flight.

Medina was small and barbarous despite its Yemenite tribes and its many Jews, but as it commanded Meccan trade routes to the north, Mahomet's enemies were gravely disturbed. At first, for lack of funds and prestige, he made little way in the place, the Jews refusing to accept him into the company of the Prophets. He could organize no more than occasional raids on small caravans, in one of which a Meccan protégé was killed during the sacred month. Early in 623, failure to ambush a large caravan, led by the Koreishite chief, Abu Sufian, ended in Mahomet and a few hundred believers colliding at Badr, where the Medina road emerges to the coast from the hills, with a more numerous force, sent to the caravan's support. The prayer-discipline kept the Muslimin in rank, while the enemy's cavalry and camelry wore itself out on the sands, and in a single day Mahomet became an acknowledged Prophet and a temporal King, able to put his faithful into the high places of Medina and deal at will with its Jews.

### Rise of Mahomet's Star

The Meccans now made their effort. Marching three hundred miles to Medina itself, they skirted the walls on the west to meet Mahomet and his levy in the gardens under Mount Uhud. A doubtful day ended in the dispersal of the Muslimin and the wounding of their Prophet. Hearing he was dead, Abu Sufian, who desired no war with the city, drew off, only to learn too late that Mahomet was challenging again. Twice more the Meccans tried to finish with him, but their last expedition, in 627, failing to pass the Khandak, a low breastwork or trench covering the east of Medina, suffered too severely. Five years of such failure had served to exalt the Prophet's star in all Arabia. He had exterminated the Medinese Jews; he had won over the Beduins on the Meccan roads; and he judged it time to test feeling in Mecca by appearing, a would-be pilgrim, without its walls. Though he might not enter the city, he wrung a promise of a ten years' truce out of the disheartened chiefs, and went back well content. Fighting men now flocked to his banner, and the problem of feeding the lusts of their bodies and souls made him look round for non-believers to mulct. The last of the Jews at Khaibar served for a turn, but Mahomet foresaw a moment

when no more satisfaction might be got from barren Arabia. Therefore, he sent out a famous notice of his intention to attack all the provinces on its borders, failing their ransom by confession of his creed and tributary submission.

### Pilgrim, Conqueror, and Prophet

Meanwhile, another season of pilgrimage impending, he rode to Mecca again with a doubled following, entered the city, and during three days ostentatiously honoured its ancient shrine. Civic opinion slid ever more rapidly towards his side. Leaders in war, like Khalid el-Walid, followed his return to Medina, and when a twelve-month later he was again before Mecca with ten thousand riders, the city was at his mercy to order as he would by fusing its traditional observances with his own tenets. He had still to reckon with Beduin enmity outside, but a supreme victory at Hunain (probably near Wadi Safra and Badr) ended that danger; also, he had still to combat the hostility of Mecca's rival, Taif, but with this he compromised after an abortive siege. Later in that year, 630, he could muster thirty thousand men for a raid up the Syrian road, designed to wash out a serious check suffered a twelvemonth earlier in Ghassan. The season after his return saw his apogee. Embassies from all Arabia beset his mean hut, and he made his last pilgrimage unarmed. But his health was failing; campaigning, excitement, sensual indulgence, had sapped his vigour, and when fever attacked him on his return from Mecca in May, 632, he succumbed.

His army was camped outside the town, and as soon as the disputed succession was assured to Abu-Bekr, the Caliph thought well to dispatch it to the trans-Jordan country, as the Prophet had intended. Other soldiers, however, had to be found, for on news of Mahomet's death almost all the peninsula abjured Islam. Flying columns, reinforced late in the year by the returned army of Syria, restored the situation with astonishing ease, no serious resistance being met with except in Wadi Hanifa of Nejd.

### Christendom Routed in the Holy Land

The re-entry into Medina of all these fighting zealots raised the old problem more acutely—how should they be satisfied?—and Abu-Bekr was compelled to the far-reaching plan of a permanent northern war on the marches of Syria and Mesopotamia. The bulk of the army was drafted off in three divisions towards Palestine, while a single column went north-eastward, followed by Khalid, to pick up Beduins and try its luck on the Euphrates. Abu-Bekr lived to hear, a year later, that, having carried the outposts of the Byzantine and Persian



Empires, both armies were unlikely to be seen again for long enough. Dying in August, 634, he left the sequel on the knees of Omar.

The second Caliph encouraged perseverance in the campaign by reinforcing both armies. The Syrian had been taken over by Khalid, who drove an imperial force out of Galilee and occupied Damascus, but had to withdraw again to better ground to wait the main attack of Byzantium. The final shock was delivered in August, 636, in the Yarmuk plain below the Lake of Gennesaret, on a day of torrid, sand-laden storm, and the army of Christendom recoiled a wreck. The emperor, who had waited at Antioch, repassed the Taurus, and, but for one abortive effort, left Syria to the Arabs.

#### Omar Master of Arab-speaking Asia

On the Euphrates four years of guerrilla war roused Yezdegird, Sassanian king of Ctesiphon, to restore Hira and end the trouble. The first objective attained, his general, Rustum, sat down, in 637, at Qadesiya to force Saad el-Waggas, the Muslim leader, to disperse his army or fight. The latter waited for Syrian reinforcements, and for such another day as had favoured the faith on the Yarmuk. Then he swooped on the Persian camp with the same catastrophic success. Fugitives, whom he chased to the Tigris, scared the Sassanian out of his capital, and two years later Yezdegird abandoned Mesopotamia for Iran. By 639 virtually all Asia that is Arab-speaking to-day obeyed Omar.

The Caliph laboured to control the uncontrollable and to bind to their poor place of origin men who were finding richer homes and founding greater States, and he did succeed in imposing canons of social, though not political, uniformity on all Muslim territories. He it was who provided for the committal of God's revealed words to an unalterable form, though the Koran was not actually ready before his murder in 644. He it was also who, using judiciously other remembered words and the daily example of the Prophet in life, confirmed to believers everywhere common social pre-eminence, without life being rendered intolerable for the unbelieving.

#### Schism, Sedition, and Strife

But more he could not do. Political control of the empire from Medina was impossible, as the invasion of Egypt by Amr el-As, in 639, without leave of his Caliph, sufficiently demonstrated. Under a third and weaker successor, Othman, disintegration quickened. Mesopotamia, Iran, and even a great part of Arabia began to dissent on spiritual not less than material grounds. Millions of new-made

Muslims, naturally incarnationist, who felt God's sanction of their faith and state weakening with each successor to the Caliphate, called for a leader of more immediate divine authority to stay the secularisation of Islam.

Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, had been named (so they believed against the hostile witness of Ayesha) by the God-inspired lips. His sons, who were of the blood and adepts in the esoteric law, would provide a way for all flesh to God. When Othman tried to counter sedition by imposing on all provinces the rule of Meccan Koreishites, his days and those of the Medinese Empire were numbered. Men from Irak and Egypt slew him in his house in 656, and Ali, after a stiff struggle, came into his own.

The fourth—Legitimists hold him the first—Caliph made good in Arabia, Egypt, and even Irak, but not in Syria, where ruled the strongest of Othman's Meccans, Moawiya, son of old Abu Sufian. Ali left Medina to inaugurate Muslim civil war, but failing against Moawiya at Siffin, on the Euphrates, he accepted an arbitration inconsistent with his own claim to exclusive legitimacy. The Syrian governor assumed the Caliphate, and Ali died at Kufa in 660, by the hands of disappointed vindicators of his divine right.

#### Rise of the Grand Sherifate of Mecca

For about a generation Hejaz held out against the secular Caliphate established by Moawiya in Syria in 660; but by 692 its opposition was worn out. It passed peaceably to the Abbasid Caliphs; but, remaining at heart attached to the line of Ali, it needed to be alternately chastised and cajoled. Haroun al-Rashid, in particular, did his utmost to conciliate its Holy Cities, but they were treated as provincial. Like the rest of the peninsula, Hejaz fell under the Carmathians, and in 928 suffered at their hands the loss of the Black Stone of the Kaaba. A sherifial family of Nejd then seized Mecca, and set up a private tyranny in the city about 950; but the Fatimite Caliph of Egypt expelled it and introduced, in 966, the Mussa sherifs, who are regarded as the first legitimate princes of Mecca.

Thus in schism and under heretical domination began the Grand Sherifate of Mecca, destined for two centuries to be a scourge of the pilgrimage. A show of orthodoxy and consideration for the Muslim community was not assured again until Saladin and his Turco-Syrians, having captured Yemen, gripped Hejaz between their twin forces in South Arabia and in Syria. The result was an abasement of the Sherifate, from which Qatadah, of a new house of Ali's kin, redeemed it about 1200. His dynasty, generally respectful of Egypt, but careful to rest



## HEJAZ & ITS STORY

on a nearer alliance with the Zeidi heretics of Yemen, contrived to recover practical independence and keep it till, in the fifteenth century, the later Mameluke Sultans took steps, in the interest of the common faith, to mediatise the custody of its spiritual centre. Unconsciously they prepared a way for stronger Turks than themselves—the victorious Osmanlis, who passed over their bodies to take Hejaz without a struggle in 1517.

The Sherifal dynasty, however, continued without interruption, and its history throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries tells of persistent efforts to recover practical independence and establish a lasting hegemony over the Beduin tribes of western Nejd and the oasis of Qasim. This aim was virtually achieved by about 1750, and the half century following this date is looked back to now as the Golden Age of the Sherifate. It was closed by the Wahabite invasion of 1803, which led after a few years to an occupation of the country by Mehemet Ali, Viceroy of Egypt. He did not withdraw till 1840. After a few years of anarchy the Turks succeeded in imposing their control again on the Holy Cities. They experienced constant trouble with the Abadilah family of Sherifs, which Mehemet Ali had preferred to the throne, and in 1838 ships of Great Britain and France had to intervene with their guns at Jeddah to repress an anti-Turk movement. By the 'eighties local power in Hejaz had passed entirely from the Emir to the Vali of Mecca.

The revolutions of 1908-9 at the heart of the Ottoman Empire weakened its hold in Arabia. A new Emir of Mecca, Hussein, treated his masters with growing contumely, and Abdul Aziz es-Saud, heir of the Wahabite Emirs, who had turned the Rashids out of Riyadh and Qasim in 1902, fell on Hasa, in 1913. When the Turks embarked in the European War further revolts were to be expected. In Yemen they increased their holding by

invasion of the Aden Protectorate. But in Hejaz Emir Hussein was not to be staved off, once he had seen how Arab nationalism was dealt with in Syria, and learned that a Turkish Expeditionary Force was to traverse his country.

Supported by British supplies, he rose in June, 1916, and in little more than three months freed all south Hejaz; but he could make no impression on the well-supplied garrison of Medina, nor on its railway communications, till his son, Feisal, moved up the coast early in 1917 to operate first from El Wijh and finally from Akabah. Neither Medina nor Maan, however, was taken in the end by his arms. Allenby's advance, in September, 1918, emptied the last, and the terms of the Armistice tardily compelled, in January, 1919, the surrender of the first.

Meanwhile, in 1916, Hussein had proclaimed himself king of Hejaz, aspiring to be single lord of all the Arabs. The unreality of his power, however, was exposed, as soon as his European helpers and the Turks had withdrawn, by the Emir of Riyadh, strengthened by a recent revival of Wahabite fervour among certain of his subjects calling themselves Brethren (Akhwan). He captured Taif in 1920, and would have had Mecca, like his forefathers, but for his fear of the British, whom he wished as allies but had done little to help in the war.

Unsettled conditions continued in 1921-22. Towards the close of the former year fighting took place between the forces of the Sultan of Nejd and Ibn Rashid, resulting in the surrender of the latter's capital and the capture of Taif, sixty miles south-east of Mecca, thus threatening the position of King Hussein. The rule of the latter, by no means secure, was only possible owing to the subsidy granted by the British Government to the neighbouring Arab chieftain Sultan Ibn Saud of Nejd. In addition, both the King of Hejaz and the Imam of Yemen are subsidised, pending development of their territory under British auspices.

## HEJAZ: FACTS AND FIGURES

### The Country

Lies for nearly 700 miles along east coast of Red Sea, stretching about 200 miles inland, from Akabah on the north to Asir on the south, with the emirate of Nejd and the Great Nefud and Great Arabian Deserts on the east. Includes territories of the Zahran, Ghamid, and Bisha tribes. Armies in 1918 numbered 40,000 men.

### Government

Free and independent kingdom since 1916 when, under the Grand Sherif of Mecca, it threw off Turkish allegiance and the Sherif, also known as Emir Hussein Ibn Ali, assumed the title King of Hejaz, to whom Great Britain grants a subsidy. By the Treaty of Sévres, August 10, 1920, the loss by Turkey of her Arab territories was confirmed, including that of Hejaz.

### Products

Area barren or semi-barren, chief crop being dates, grown especially in Medina oasis. Small quantity of hides, wool and gum exported. Chief source of wealth derived from annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

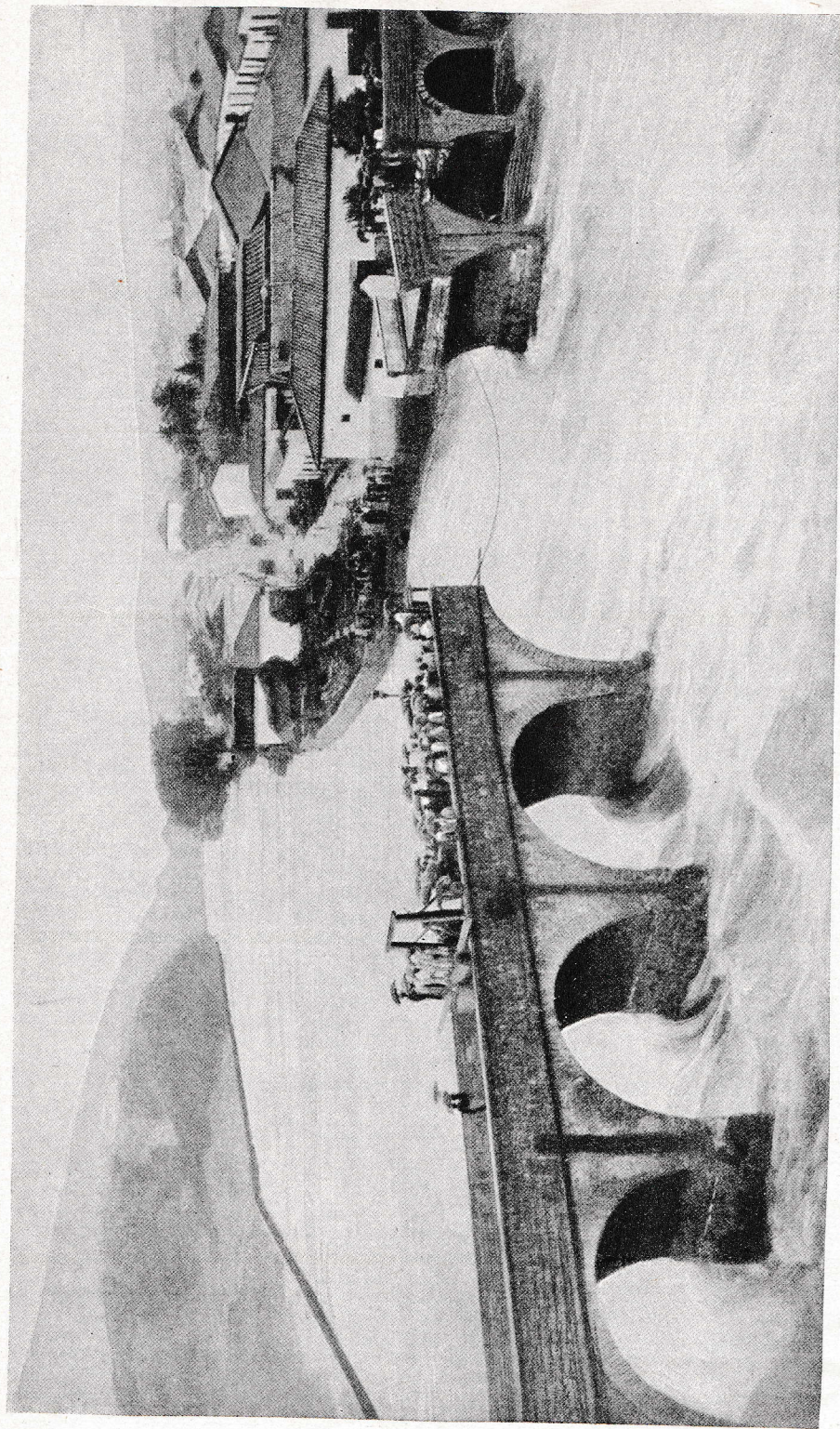
### Communications

Hejaz railway, from Medina to Damascus, about 1,105 miles, constructed 1901-8.

### Chief Towns

Mecca, capital (population 70,000), Medina (10,000), Yembo, and Taif. Jeddah is the chief port of the country, and in addition to its importance as the place of entry of pilgrims going to the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, has a large trade in carpets, hides, coffee, mother-of-pearl, etc., with a population of 25,000.





### SMASHED ARCHES AT TEGUCIGALPA IN THE CHOLUTECA'S FLOODED PATH TO THE SEA

Anxiously crowding the forlorn-looking ends of the broken bridge, the unfortunate people are waiting under their umbrellas until communication is once more established by means of a hawser. The force and drive of the fierce volume of angry water may be gauged by a glance at the difference in the level of the river on each side of the arches. Through these the torrent pours and whirls, trying still to demolish this barrier in its course, and surging and eddying to gain its freedom

*Photo, F. J. Youngblood*